(54) Title: AN IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL
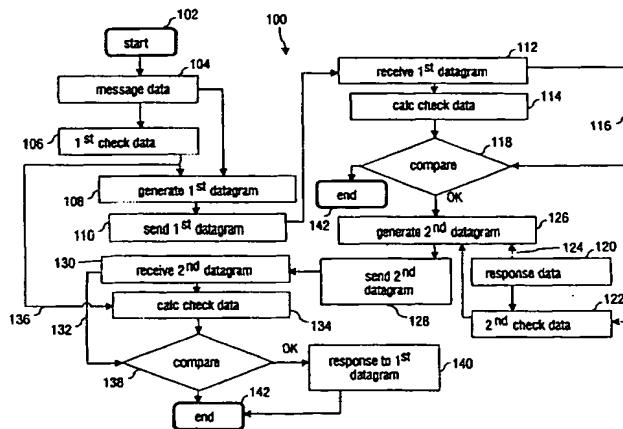
(57) Abstract: A method of communicating datagrams between terminals (nodes) of a communications system. In systems op-
erating over unreliable media redundancy check data (136) can be included in a datagram for use in verifying the integrity of the
datagram when received (112) by a terminal; satisfactory receipt of the datagram can be confirmed by the receiving terminal issuing
(128) a response datagram to the originating terminal, for example an acknowledgement. The present invention utilises the redun-
dancy check data (116) of a received original datagram (which redundancy check data includes information on the identity of the
originating terminal and the content of the datagram) in the generation (122) of new redundancy check data for the acknowledgement
(or other type of response) datagram. The originating terminal receives (130) and processes (134, 138) the response datagram in
conjunction with its own local record of the redundancy check data (136) of the original datagram. In this way, the present invention
ensures the response datagram is compact in size whilst enabling the originating terminal not only to verify (138) the integrity of the
response datagram but also to recognise (140) the response datagram as being the response to the original datagram.